REMARKS

Claims 1-17 and 26 are pending in this application, of which Claims 1, 11, 12, 17 and 26 are independent claims. Claims 1, 11, 12, 17 and 26 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claim 7 has been amended to correct a minor, formal error. No change in scope is either intended or believed effected by at least the latter amendment, which has not been made for purposes relating to patentability.

Claims 1-17 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,275,303 (*Fukaya*).

As amended, independent Claim 1 recites:

"1. An image processing apparatus, comprising:
generation means for generating a bitmap image on the basis of inputted object data;
hold means for holding attribute information representing a plurality of different types of attributes of the inputted object data in units of pixels of a bitmap image generated by said generation means, the attribute information being formed by allocating plural bits to each pixel of the bitmap image;
conversion means for converting the bitmap image generated by said generation means into data capable of being processed by an image output unit; and
switch means for switching the contents of processing in said conversion means on the basis of a combination of the plurality of different types of attributes represented by the attribute information held by said hold means.

According to an aspect of the invention to which Claim 1 relates, there is a holding of attribute information representing a plurality of different types of attributes in units of pixels of a bitmap image, wherein the attribute information is formed by allocating plural bits to each pixel of the bitmap image. Contents of processing for the bitmap image are switched on the basis of a combination of the plurality of different types of attributes represented by the attribute information allocated to each pixel.

By virtue of these feature, it is possible to apply various and appropriate processing to a bitmap image. Furthermore, since contents of processing are changed based on the attribute information allocated to each pixel, a change of processing is controlled without designating an image area.

Fukaya relates to an image processing method of binarizing plural multi-level tone value images. At col. 7, lines 7-65, *Fukaya* refers generally to forming templates, a "synthesizing" means converting a lower resolution pixel into a unique configuration of plural higher resolution format pixels, conventional scaling using a straight forward block mapping of a single, lower resolution pixel to a full block of higher resolution pixels, and different synthesis templates for an exemplary two-by-two cell matrix representation for pixel placement in a higher resolution format. At col. 9, lines 9-61, *Fukaya* refers to rendering synthesized image data in a "resolution doubling" manner, a pixel map, identifying scan lines, selecting an active pixel, and a working template match. *Fukaya* also refers to a text/line art procedure converting any text and line art images into a raster image, and storing a raster image at a resolution format that is less than or equal to the resolution format of a print engine (col. 6, lines 29-40).

Also, Fig. 2 of *Fukaya* refers to a switching a process based on a command number (see, e.g., the blocks including the respective terms "COM. =1?" to "COM. = 7?"). However, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Fukaya* that would teach or suggest a switch a process based on a combination of plural different types of attributes, as recited in Claim 1.

Furthermore, as shown in Fig. 3G, *Fukaya* designates an area to change the process. However, *Fukaya* is not seen to teach or suggest allocating attribute information to each pixel and utilizing such attribute information for changing contents of processing. Indeed, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Fukaya* that would teach or suggest holding attribute information formed by allocating plural bits to each pixel, which information represents a plurality of different types of attributes in units of pixels of a bitmap image, and switching contents of processing the bitmap image on the basis of a combination of the plurality of different types of attributes (in units of pixel of the bitmap image), as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 1 is deemed clearly patentable over *Fukaya*.

Independent Claims 11, 12, 17, and 26 recite features that are similar in many relevant respects to those of Claim 1 emphasized above, and also are believed to be clearly patentable over *Fukaya* for substantially the same reasons as is Claim 1.

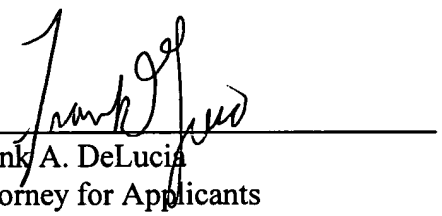
A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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